



Drone Radar Operational Guidelines

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Office of Enforcement and Emergency Services has prepared a publication titled **Drone Radar Operational Guidelines**. Drone radar is the unconventional use of police traffic radar in either an attended or unattended mode for speed deterrent purposes. The need for these guidelines came as a result of concerns expressed by law enforcement officials at *Traffic Safety Summit I* in Chicago, April 1990. Many of the participating executives expressed concern about the difficulties in enforcing laws on speeding. The police officials specifically asked the U.S. Department of Transportation and NHTSA to develop guidelines on how the States might use drone radar in compliance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations and policies.

Except for a few specifically authorized test programs, the FCC had previously prohibited the use of unattended drone radar operations unless the reflected radar signal served some purpose, such as activating signs and warning devices. Based upon a review of the NHTSA guidelines, the FCC has revised their policy and now will permit law enforcement agencies to use attended or unattended radar units, without the requirement that the return signal be used for a specific purpose. This approval is contingent upon a police department's adherence to the limited and controlled use as recommended in the guidelines.

Drone Radar Operational Guidelines contains guidelines and recommendations for police departments to use in establishing departmental policy on the use of drone radar. The report contains background information on speeding and speed limit enforcement. The report also

recommends the following components to be incorporated in any department policy on drone radar:

- It must be part of an agency's speed enforcement efforts.
- The selection of a site should be based on problem identification.
- It must adhere to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules.
- It must be under local control and supervision.
- Program evaluation must be included as part of the policy.

The report discusses these individual guidelines in detail and provides suggestions as to what roadway locations could be considered as site selections.

Drone Radar Operational Guidelines also provides a model policy for police departments to use in establishing the use of drone radar as part of their speed deterrent efforts. The model policy incorporates all of the recommended guidelines.

Copies of **Drone Radar Operational Guidelines** can be obtained from the following address:

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Office of Enforcement and Emergency Services
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